

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Royal Gorge Field Office
3028 E. Main Street
Canon City, CO 81212**

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-F02-2014-053 CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional): Lease # COC 49320 and COC 61148

PROJECT NAME: Razor 30K Federal APDs

PLANNING UNIT: North East

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: T 10N R 58 W S 30 6th PM, (Weld County)

APPLICANT: Whiting Oil and Gas

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION The proposed action is to approve seven Applications for Permits to Drill (APDs), for Whiting. The project takes place approximately 15 miles north of New Raymer, CO, on fee (privately owned) surface over fee (privately owned) minerals, in order to produce private and federal minerals. An EA (DOI-BLM-CO-200-2013-080 EA) previously analyzed the environmental impacts of the construction of the pad, access road, associated pipelines, and the drilling of one horizontal well, known at the time as the Razor 30-3124 H, in June 2013. The FONSI and decision record to approve the entire project was signed by BLM, RGFO on September 26, 2013, and an APD was approved for this well on September 27, 2013.

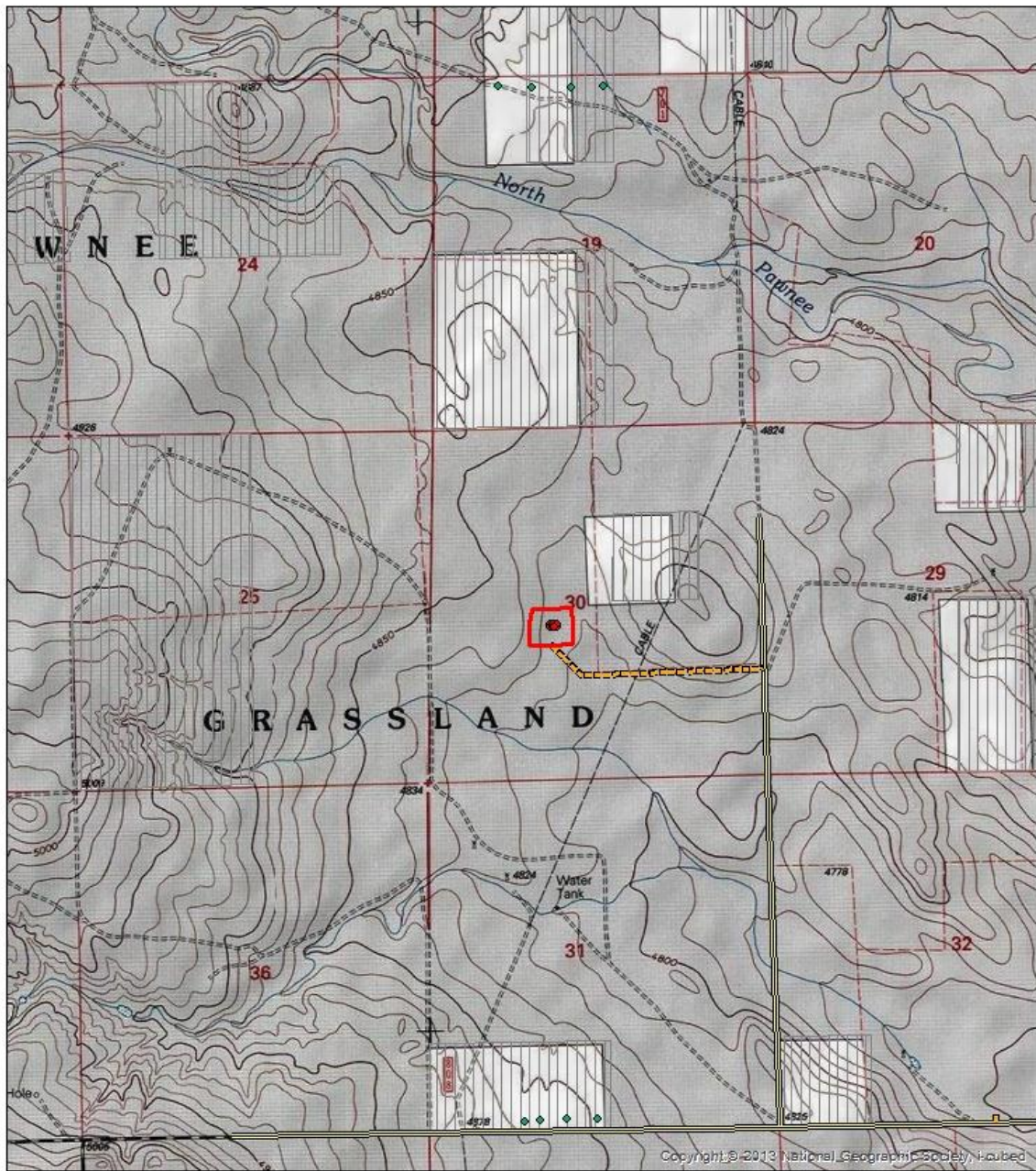
Whiting has recently submitted seven additional APDs to drill horizontal fee/fee/fed wells from the surface of this previously permitted pad. According to a phone conversation with Whiting's permitting agent at the time of the receipt of the seven additional APDs, no work had begun on the ground for this project, but Whiting planned on starting construction of the pad and road shortly. This action is authorized under the existing APD. All surface disturbance associated with the additional seven wells will take place within the boundaries of the previously permitted pad, so no new surface disturbance will be analyzed in this document. Because the impacts resulting from the surface disturbance and drilling were previously analyzed in the EA for the initial well, a section 390 CX, type 2 can be used to approve the seven additional wells on the previously permitted pad.

The previously approved pad which will contain these wells is approximately 11.5 acres in size, and will be reduced to approximately 4 acres after interim reclamation. The previously approved access road is approximately 25 feet wide by 3,297 feet long, and the approved pipeline corridor is approximately 20 feet wide by 10,010 feet in length. The pipeline will be reclaimed after installation and the location and road will be completely reclaimed when the well is plugged.

The drilling program for the additional Razor Federal 30K wells is very similar to the drilling program of the previously permitted Razor 30-3124H well. The depth of each well will be approximately 6000'

vertical, with total wellbore lengths of about 13,500'. These wells target the Niobrara play. The wells will be drilled using a closed loop system, with no pits required. The drilling and completion of each well is estimated to take approximately 21 days.

All operations will be conducted in conformance with all federal (including Oil and Gas Onshore Orders), state and local regulations, as submitted with the APD packages, and conditions of approval of APDs.



Razor 30K Federal Oil Wells Project Map

DOI-BLM-CO-F02-2014-053 CX

6th PM, T10N R58W

- Previously Permitted Pad
- ◆ Proposed Razor 30K SHL
- ◆ Razor 30K BHL
- Previously Permitted Road
- Existing Road



0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Miles



NOTE TO MAP USERS
No warrantee is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the data layers shown on this map. The official land records of the data providers should be checked or current status on any specific tract of land.



Razor 30K Federal Oil Wells Project NAIP

DOI-BLM-CO-F02-2014-053 CX

6th PM, T10N R58W

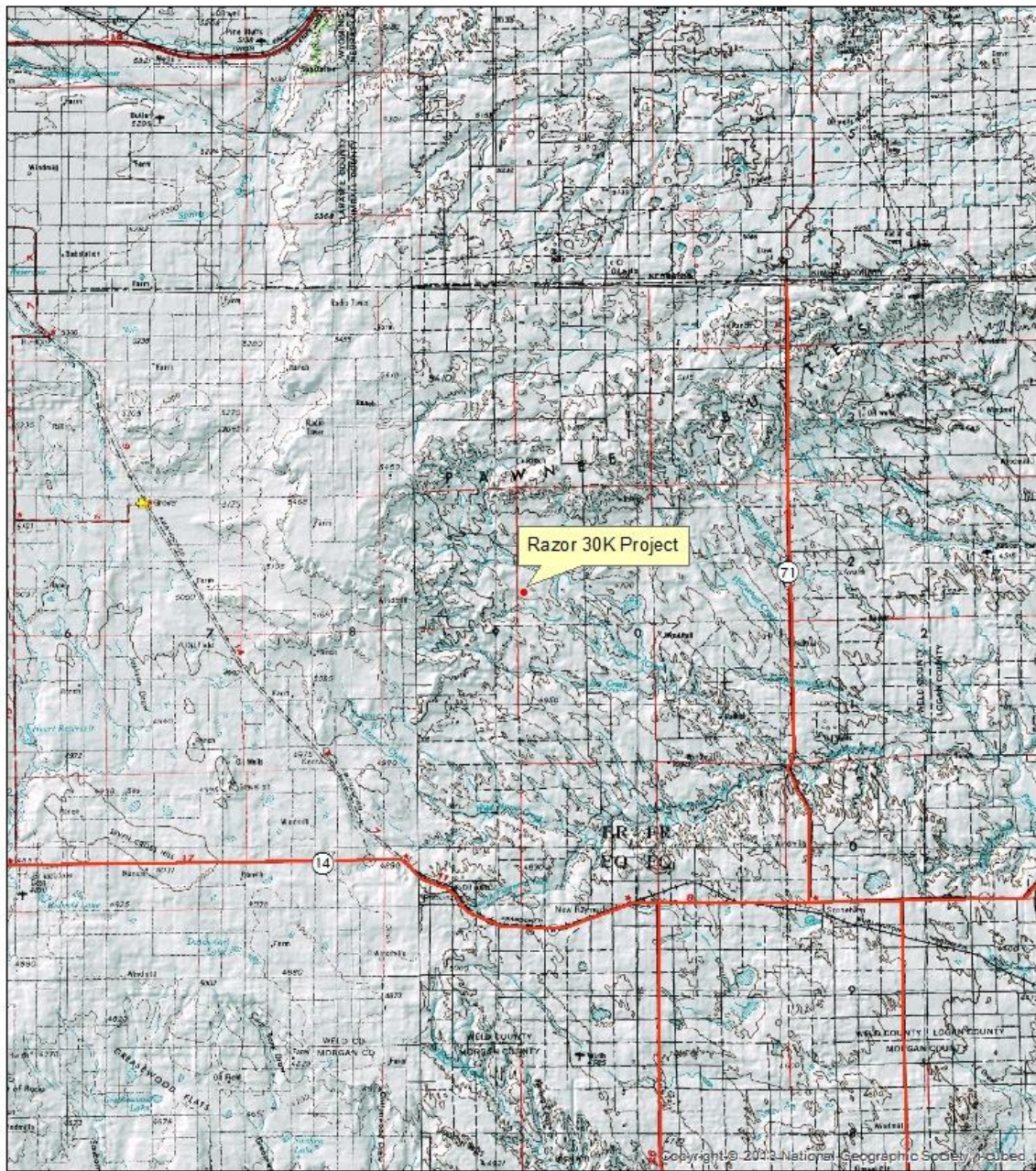
- Previously Permitted Pad
- ◆ Proposed Razor 30K SHL
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0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Miles



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Razor 30K Federal Oil Wells Overview Map

DOI-BLM-CO-F02-2014-053 CX

6th PM, T10N R58W



0 1.5 3 6 9 12 Miles

 Previously Permitted Pad



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PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW : The Proposed Action is subject to and has been reviewed for conformance with the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3):

Name of Plan: : Northeast Resource Area Plan and Record of Decision as amended by the Colorado Oil and Gas Final EIS and Record of Decision (RD)

Date Approved: 09/16/86 amended 12/06/91

Decision Number: O&G Resources, Issue 21

Decision Language: “These 210,410 acres of surface and subsurface may be leased and developed for oil and gas with the standard stipulations included in the leases and standard site-specific stipulations included in any use authorization.”

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW: This proposed action is listed as a Categorical Exclusion in Energy Policy Act of 2005 Section 390 (2). None of the following exceptions in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, apply.

Exclusion Criteria	YES	NO
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		x
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; lands with wilderness characteristics; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands; floodplains; national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		x
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.		x
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		x
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		x
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		x
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		x
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		x
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		x
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations.		x

11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites.		x
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species.		x

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM REVIEW			
NAME	TITLE	AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	Initials/date
Matt Rustand	Wildlife Biologist	Terrestrial Wildlife, T&E, Migratory Birds	MR, 7/28/2014
John Lamman	Range Management Spec.	Range, Vegetation, Farmland, Weeds	JL, 07/28/2014
Dave Gilbert	Fisheries Biologist	Aquatic Wildlife, Riparian/Wetlands	DG, 8/11/14
Melissa Smeins	Geologist	Minerals, Paleontology	MJS, 8/05/2014
John Smeins	Hydrologist	Hydrology, Water Quality/Rights, Soils	JS, 7/25/14
Aaron Richter	NRS	Air Quality	AR 7/24/2014
Jeff Covington	Cadastral Surveyor	Cadastral Survey	JC, 7/25/14
Kalem Lenard	Outdoor Recreation Planner	Recreation, Wilderness, LWCs, Visual, ACEC, W&S Rivers,	KL, 8/11/2014
Ken Reed	Forester	Forestry	N/A
Martin Weimer	NEPA Coordinator	Environmental Justice, Noise, SocioEconomics	AR, 8/11/14
Monica Weimer	Archaeologist	Cultural, Native American	MMW, 7/28/14
Greg Valladares	Realty Specialist	Realty	NA
Steve Cunningham	Law Enforcement Ranger	Law Enforcement	NA
Ty Webb	Fire Management Officer	Fire	NA

REMARKS:

Cadastral Services: Chain of Survey Certificate located in the project folder.

Cultural Resources: Although cultural resources were found near the area of potential effect [see report CR-RG-13-115 (P)], no sites determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were found. Therefore, the proposed project will have no impact on any historic properties (those eligible for the NRHP).

Native American Religious Concerns: In August 2013, BLM conducted a consultation (Project CR-RG-13-43 NA) with the following tribes: Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Comanche Tribe of Oklahoma, Crow Creek Sioux, Eastern Shoshone, Jicarilla Apache Nation, Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma, Northern Arapaho Tribe, Northern Cheyenne Tribe, the Ute Tribe, Oglala Sioux Tribe, Pawnee Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Southern Ute Tribe, Standing Rock Lakota Tribe, and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. No properties of traditional religious and cultural significance in Weld County were identified by the tribes. Therefore, no direct or indirect impacts to properties of concern to the tribes are anticipated.

Threatened and Endangered Species: A survey will be conducted to identify the presence of nesting habitat for ferruginous hawks. Ferruginous hawks are sensitive to disturbance at the nest; activities such as mineral extraction near nests result in lower nest success or abandonment. There should be no activities within 0.5 miles of active nests.

Migratory Birds: To be in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Memorandum of Understanding between BLM and USFWS required by Executive Order 13186, BLM must avoid actions, where possible, that result in a “take” of migratory birds. Pursuant to BLM Instruction Memorandum 2008-050, to reduce impacts to Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC), no habitat disturbance (removal of vegetation such as timber, brush, or grass) is allowed during the periods of May 15 - July 15, the breeding and brood rearing season for most Colorado migratory birds. The provision will not apply to completion activities in disturbed areas that were initiated prior to May 15 and continue into the 60-day period.

An exception to this timing limitation will be granted if nesting surveys conducted no more than one week prior to vegetation-disturbing activities indicate no nesting within 30 meters (100 feet) of the area to be disturbed. Surveys shall be conducted by a qualified breeding bird surveyor between sunrise and 10:00 a.m. under favorable conditions.

Paleontological Resources: The proposed construction of the well pads, access to the well pads, and pipeline may penetrate the protective soil layer impacting the bedrock unit below. Because a highly fossiliferous (Class 5) formation is present and susceptible to adverse impacts, mitigation measures are required. The BLM recommends that a field inventory be performed prior to any surface disturbing activity. Depending on the results of the inventory, monitoring during construction may be recommended. If any significant fossils are found, development of a research design and data recovery may also be recommended before the project proceeds. Any fossils recovered on private land belong to the private landowner; however the BLM recommends the use of a federally approved repository for storage of any fossils recovered in these efforts.

In many instances where the surface estate is not owned by the Federal Government, the mineral estate is, and is administered by the BLM. Paleontological resources are considered to be part of the surface estate. If BLM is going to approve an action involving the mineral estate that may affect the paleontological resources, the action should be conditioned with appropriate paleontological mitigation recommendations to protect the interests of the surface owner. The surface owner may elect to waive these recommendations; such a waiver must be documented in the casefile.

Minerals: The drilling plan for this proposal will be reviewed at the APD stage to ensure compliance with BLM regulations, including BLM onshore order #2 requires that the casing and cementing programs shall protect and/or isolate all useable water zones, lost circulation zones, abnormally pressured zones, and any prospectively valuable minerals.

Wastes, Hazardous or Solid: Protective/Mitigation Measures: The following mitigation will assist in reducing potential spills resulting in groundwater and/or soil contamination:

- All Above Ground Storage Tanks will need to have secondary containment and constructed in accordance with standard industry practices or an associated Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures plan in accordance with State regulations (if applicable).
- If drums are used, secondary containment constructed in accordance with standard industry practices or governing regulations is required. Storage and labeling of drums should be in accordance with recommendations on associated MSDS sheets, to account for chemical characteristics and compatibility.
- Appropriate level of spill kits need to be onsite and in vehicles.
- All spill reporting needs to follow the reporting requirements outlined in NTL-3A.
- All concrete washout water needs to be contained and properly disposed of at a permitted offsite disposal facility.
- If pits are utilized they need to be lined to mitigate leaching of liquids to the subsurface, as necessary.

NAME OF PREPARER: Aaron Richter

SUPERVISORY REVIEW: /s/ Jay Raiford

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: /s/ Martin Weimer

DATE: 8/14/14

DECISION AND RATIONALE: I have reviewed this Categorical Exclusion and have decided to implement the Proposed Action.

This action is listed in the Department Manual as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action relative to the 10 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an exception and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: /s/ Melissa K.S. Garcia
For Keith E. Berger, Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 8/14/14